(c) Broadly the following issues were discussed:—

(i) Declaration/upgradation of important links of State roads to National Highways.

(ii) Release of Central Road Fund as per the resolution adopted by the two House of Parliament in May, 1988.

(iii) Four laning of NH No. 8B leading to Porbandar.

(iv) Allocation of more funds for National Highways (Original) works in Gujarat during 1998-99.

(v) Approval of projects submitted by Government of Gujarat.

(vi) Completion of Ahmedabad-Vadodara expressway.

(d) Following important links of State Highways were agreed to be accorded priority for declaration as National Highways, subject to availability of funds.

(i) Jetpur to Somnath via Junagarah and Veeraval.

(ii) Joining Hazira with Surat and Dhulia section of NH-6.

(e) The 9th Plan has not yet been finalised and it is not possible to give any definite time-frame for conversion of State Highways into National Highways.

Connecting major towns of Assam with Guwahati by air transport

*89. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan to connect all the major towns of Assam with Guwahati and other major cities of India by air transport;

(b) whether Government propose to connect Guwahati with Tezpur, Jorhat, Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh by the same flight;

(c) whether Government propose to connect Dhubri with Guwahati by improving the aerodrome of Dhubri and introducing a flight; and

(d) whether Government porpose to give concessions to the passengers who are travelling to and fro to North-East as there is a demand for getting concession in airfare due to bottlenecks of surface transport to the North-East?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) to (c) Dibrugarh, Guwahati, Jorhat, Lilabari, Silchar and Tezpur towns in Assam are already airlinked.

Dhubri (Rupsi) aerodrome is not fit for operation and it needs major renovation/ modification work. No scheduled airline has shown interest in operating to this place.

With a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services and taking into consideration the need for air transport services of different regions in the country particularly the North East Region, the Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines. The airlines are free to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability subject to compliance with the route dispersal guidelines.

A proposal for dedicated air services to the North Eastern region is under formulation which envisages providing incentives to attract operators for connecting places in the North-East region.

(d) Fares on North-Eastern sectors are about 40% lower than the comparable sectors in the rest of the country.

Pending cases in Supreme Court and High Courts

*90. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pending cases in Supreme Court and High Courts during the last three years in each category; and